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IPHIGENIA TAURICA 113 AS A DOCUMENT IN THE
HISTORY OF ARCHITECTURE

ὄρα δέ γ' εἴσω τριγλῶφον ὅποι κενὸν
δέμας καθεῖναι.

IN 1761 Winckelmann, in his *Anmerkungen über die Baukunst der Alten*,¹ made use of these lines as evidence for his theory that in very early times the metopes of a Greek temple were left unfilled: "for as Orestes and Pylades are searching for a means of entrance into the temple of Diana Taurica, in order to steal away the statue of the goddess, Pylades proposes to his friend to crawl in within the triglyphs, that is, as I understand it, between them." This conjecture has met the almost universal approval of editors of Euripides; while writers on the history of architecture accept it as an important contribution to the theory of the origin and development of the triglyph frieze. It is not my hope to be able to settle all the difficulties of this vexed passage, but it is, at any rate, time to examine it more closely to see if it really merits the importance that has been so generally accorded it.

In the first place we have no reason to think that Euripides was an archaeologist, deliberately representing on the stage a type of Greek construction which was in his day two or more centuries out of date. Such was certainly not the spirit of the age, as one can readily see by examining the vase paintings of his contemporaries.

In verse 405 of the play the chorus, referring to the temple, uses the words *περικίονας ναοῖς*. Some editors take this to mean that the building was actually peripteral. If this be final we need look no further, since a peripteral building has a frieze above the columns but none about the cella. Consequently one who penetrated the frieze would still be outside the building, and Winckelmann's interpretation falls to the ground.

It seems more likely, however, that the words just quoted are not to be taken too literally, for they are found in a lyric passage

¹ *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. Eiselein, 1825, p. 389.

and are not altogether in harmony with verse 96: ἀμφιβληστρα γὰρ τοίχων ὀρέας / ὑψηλά, which implies a *templum in antis*.¹ That this temple was made to represent sun-dried brick or wood is unlikely, for with such materials Orestes and Pylades would have found easier and safer means of entrance than by crawling through the frieze.

Assuming that the building was a *templum in antis* and that a triglyph frieze may have extended along its sides as in the Treasury of the Sicyonians in Olympia, it is still unlikely that the proposed point of attack was the side of the building. The principal action throughout the play is centred before the very doors of the temple, probably between them and the altar. Less than half the audience could have seen an opening in the frieze at the side of the building, although it would have been visible to some. But, more important than all else, Euripides was aware of a difficult but possible passage over the beams of the parastade, as is evidenced by *Orestes*, 1369 ff.: Ἀργείων ξίφος ἐκ θανάτου πέφευγα / βαρβαροῖς εὐμάρισιν / κεδρωτὰ παστάδων ὑπὲρ τέραμνα / Δωρικὰς τε τριγλύφους. That one could get into the attic of a temple is further attested by Pausanias V, 20, 4-5, and it was, in my opinion, through the attic that Pylades proposed to go; but one who passed through the frieze would not be in the attic for, at every point, the frieze lies just below the level of the ceiling.

Should we grant that the opening of which Pylades speaks actually existed in the frieze at the side of the temple, there is nothing in text or context to indicate that it was customary to leave metopes unfilled and the lines cannot be used to prove a general practice. On the other hand, I know of no examples of buildings of this type in Persia, Egypt, New Mexico, or elsewhere in which openings are left between the beams of the ceiling as they rest on the wall. In fact in the Spanish-Indian church of Cochiti Pueblo, New Mexico, the ceiling-beams are bedded in the adobe walls of the two long sides of the building, while in front is a balcony, supported by columns and reproducing in a marvelous way the type of construction that is supposed to have been employed in the primitive Greek megaron-temple and to have given rise to the Doric frieze. Even at this point clay is used to fill the spaces between the beams, and to present an even, finished surface to one who stands below. If the open frieze ap-

¹ Cf. vs. 1159: δναξ, ἔχ' αὐτοῦ πόδα σὸν ἐν παραστάσιν.

peared crude and unfinished to the New Mexican, it must have been quite as unsatisfactory to the Greek.

Added to the uncertainties that arise in an attempt to fit Winckelmann's interpretation to the facts of temple construction are even greater uncertainties pertaining to the text. The words are all Greek, it is true, and the lines may be scanned, but otherwise difficulties are everywhere apparent. The manuscripts all give the text as it is printed above, save that Parisinus reads ὦρα for ὄρα; but that the editors are desperate in their attempts to construct a text that will match the accepted interpretation is evidenced by the following emendations: ὄρα δὲ γείσα, Blomfield; ὦρα δὲ γείσων τριγλύφων ὄπου, Elmsley; πείρα δὲ γ' εἶσω, Madvig; Δωρικὰ δὲ γείσα τριγλύφων ὀπὴν κενοῦ, Wecklein; ὄρα δὲ γείσων τριγλύφων τόπους κενούς, Wecklein, 1888; ὄρα δὲ γείσων ὄπου 'στι νῶν, F. W. Schmidt; ὄρα δ' ἐκεῖ σοι τριγλύφων τόποι κenoί, Schenkl; ὄρα δὲ γ' εἶσω, τριγλύφων ὄπου κενόν, Paley; ῥᾱστον δὲ γ' εἶσω, Köchly; ὄπη, Kirchhoff. To be added to this list, which is not complete, are variants both in punctuation and in rendering.

Few of the editors, save perhaps those who have been attracted by Blomfield's emendation, have questioned the force of εἶσω; but one who has done so is Gottfried Hermann, in his edition of the play published in 1831: "*in eo non videtur verum vidisse (Handius), quod εἶσω τριγλύφων coniunxit. Immo εἶσω καθεῖναι cohaerent, καθεῖναι autem cum τριγλύφων constructum est, hac sententia: et vide saltem ubi vacuum spatium sit corpori intro ex triglyphis demittendo.*" Whether Hermann objected to taking εἶσω τριγλύφων in the sense of "between the triglyphs" I do not know, but if we accept his interpretation the passage cannot be used to support Winckelmann's theory.¹

It is my own belief that εἶσω τριγλύφων can hardly mean "between the triglyphs." A more natural significance of εἶσω in this passage is "within" in the sense of "beyond" or "behind," cf. εἶσω πυλῶν. This is the meaning I now propose for it in connection with a new interpretation of the passage to this effect: behind the frieze is an opening in the ceiling of the vestibule; by means of this opening one can make his way to the attic and let himself

¹ If, as most editors seem to think, εἶσω τριγλύφων is good Greek for "between the triglyphs" τριγλύφων must mean the several triglyphs and not the frieze as a whole, as it does in *Bacchae*, 1214: ὥς πασσαλείσῃ κρᾶτα τριγλύφοις τόδε.

down into the cella. Such was the way of escape of the Phrygian in the passage of the *Orestes* quoted above, and it seems no less likely here. This proposal solves most of the difficulties outside the text, and I am not aware that it creates any new ones. Those who insist on literal accuracy would, of course, understand this difference in the action of the Phrygian and that proposed by Pylades that, whereas the latter sees a way through the ceiling of the parastade, the former finds an opening in the pediment and descends over the frieze in making his way to the ground.

"The text is not yet healed," but the principal point of this paper is made if it calls attention to the slender character of the evidence on which our theories of the primitive frieze are based.

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